

CHAMBERS' EDINBURGH JOURNAL

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, EDITORS OF 'CHAMBERS'S INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE,' 'CHAMBERS'S EDUCATIONAL COURSE,' &c.

No. 371. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1851.

PRICE 1½d.

EXPERIMENTS IN ELECTRO-BIOLOGY.

BELIEF is an intellectual concession not always agreeable to self-love. To profess disbelief, conveys an impression of superior knowingness. There is, therefore, a great deal of scepticism which has scarcely any root but vanity. We see the operation of these feelings in the discussions which occasionally take place in social circles regarding such probationary sciences as mesmerism. When a respectable person avows his belief, the rest look on him with a kind of pity. He is thought 'green'—a terrible stigma in England. His neighbours, who had regarded him as an equal before, now feel themselves his superiors. He, on the other hand, feels it to be somewhat hard that the accidental rencontre of something which he was constrained to believe should subject him to this contemptuous treatment, with no alternative but that of a concealment of his convictions. Let him not, however, be too ready to complain, for very probably, before this rencontre, he was as sceptical as any, as resolved against yielding to any testimony on the subject, and as serenely compassionate towards those who were so unlucky as to have had their scepticism removed.

I am going to make an ingenuous confession, which I fear will cause many to turn away with disdain from this paper: so be it—I might have so acted myself three weeks ago. The contempt of the reader will give me less pain than the reflection that I have so often expressed myself with an unreasoning scepticism regarding what I now believe. But to my recital.

I was lately invited to the house of a friend, in order to witness some private experiments in what is called 'electro-biology.' The experimentalist was an American gentleman named Darling, who for some months had been giving lectures on the subject in various towns throughout Scotland. I had heard of some extraordinary feats, as they may be called, which he had performed at the mansion of the Earl of Eglintoun in Ayrshire—such as the arresting of a gentleman's hand as he was raising a glass of wine to his lips, and the fixing of a gentleman to his seat, or the causing him to start up from it under the sense of its being on fire. A Glasgow newspaper assured us that he had on several occasions thrown a number of persons into a peculiar condition, in which he fixed them in a hand-in-hand circle, so fast, that they could not separate—convinced them that they were at a feast, that they were under a heavy shower of rain, that they were drowning, that the audience was laughing at them, with the effect of drawing from them all the demonstrations of feeling suitable to the various situations or conditions in which they believed themselves to be. These were

results so entirely beyond the range of ordinary experience, that anything seemed preferable to belief. There was deception somewhere—collusion—false reporting. The beholders were a set of ninnyes, who had not looked sharply enough into the procedure of the experimentalist, or they would have detected the trick; and so forth. A friend whom I accompanied had precisely the same opinions, and he was under less restraint in expressing them. He openly professed his resolution to let the experiment be made upon himself, in the hope of demonstrating the fallacy of the whole matter.

The company assembled was composed of persons of both sexes, generally of the upper ranks of society. Most of them had been present at public demonstrations by Dr Darling, but these had not been very satisfactory. It was thought that a company of persons well known to each other, and whose recognised respectability placed them above suspicion, would supply patients qualified better to test the verity of the lecturer's professions. We sat down, about thirty in number, in a large drawing-room, and eight or nine persons, including two ladies, came forward as subjects. The lecturer disposed them in a row on chairs, and gave each a small disk, composed of zinc, with a spot of copper in the centre, on which he directed them to keep their eyes fixed for a quarter of an hour or so, in which time it would be ascertained whether any of them were to prove susceptible or not. Meanwhile silence was enjoined. My friend, who had seated himself amongst the rest, with the disk in the palm of his hand, cast me a waggish look before fixing himself in the proper attitude, as much as to say, Now you shall see this humbug exposed. I resolved, for my own part, to watch everything that was done with the greatest care, in the hope of detecting the *trick* on which I theoretically presumed the whole affair rested. It was soon to appear that trick on the part of the lecturer was entirely out of the question, and that all depended on the fidelity of his patients.

At the end of a quarter of an hour Dr Darling went softly up to the row of subjects, and said a few words to each in succession, apparently in order to ascertain the condition in which they were. It soon appeared that both ladies were in a favourable state, but that all of the gentlemen but one were unaffected. These accordingly retired, and took their seats amongst the rest of the company. What was my surprise to find that the one gentleman who appeared susceptible was my friend! The experimentalist was aware of his previous scepticism, and of course felt the greater pleasure in having succeeded with him. He gently laid his hands over the eyes of my friend, and said to him, 'Now you cannot open them.' A hearty effort seemed

to be made, but in vain. The lecturer then said, 'Now you can open them;' and he opened them accordingly. I question if he ever had occasion to open them wider. We communicated looks, testifying our common sense of surprise. We were, in fact, thrown out—he on finding himself become all at once the subject of suspicion to me and others—and I at finding myself called upon to watch one who had hitherto been my associate in the effort at detection. My friend was now requested to hold out his hands, laid palm to palm. Dr Darling, after a few passes, and pinching the fingers sharply together, said briskly, 'Now you can't separate them.' My friend tried in vain to take them asunder, till, on a nod and a word from the experimentalist, he did at length draw them apart. After a few passes along the limbs, my friend was told that he was fixed to his chair. He strained himself to rise, using the most violent muscular efforts; but all in vain, till he received permission. He afterwards acknowledged to me that he had felt as if bound down to his seat by ropes. A touch on the lips imposed an involuntary dumbness on my friend. Not till told that he might now speak, could he utter a word. He was then told that he had forgotten his name. He nevertheless pronounced it. The experimentalist performed a few further manipulations, and said emphatically, 'Now you can't tell me your name!' Sure enough the word had vanished! Our patient looked up with a blank expression, and then a stare of puzzlement, which I should vainly endeavour to describe. He finally cast a bewildered and pleading gaze upon his fascinator, who calmly smiled and nodded, as if to undo the spell, when out came the missing vocable, apparently to the no small relief of the patient. He was after this fixed to the ground standing. Sway as he might in all directions, not a foot could he move. Dr Darling also held up his fore-finger, and causing my friend to touch it, told him that he could not draw it away. He accordingly could not. Then, this spell being undone, the lecturer held up his fore-finger, and told my friend he could not touch it. He tried, darting his finger first on one side, then on another—above, below, in all directions but the right one. In short, my friend had become, from a proud sceptic and derider, a perfect victim. He withdrew from the field utterly discomfited. It appeared that he had never been asleep, but continued throughout to possess his usual consciousness. He had really done all he could to resist the commands of the operator; but power had gone from him. He had been absolutely compelled in each case to submit.

The experimentalist now turned to one of the ladies; and here a very interesting series of phenomena was presented. The lady, I may say by way of preface, is an intimate friend of my own. She is a tall, elegant person, about two years married, and the mother of one infant. Her figure is of that rounded kind which indicates an infusion of the lymphatic temperament. When found to be in the suitable state, I observed that her face was slightly flushed, and her eyes had an embarrassed expression; but she bore no other signs of being in an extraordinary condition. Her, too, the lecturer fixed to her seat, and to the floor, and to his own finger. He caused her voice to desert her; he made her forget her name; passed, in short, through a repetition of the principal experiments which had been already practised with my friend. Then he proceeded to some of apparently a higher kind. He told the lady that she was sad; and said to all appearance she was. He told her she must laugh; and she laughed accordingly—hearty and long, not stopping till she was bid. She was now seated in the middle of the floor, so that every gesture and proceeding could be accurately seen. The lecturer said to her, 'Here is a miniature of your husband,' and seemed to place something in her hand. She took the ideal article, and looked at it with an interested expression, then proceeded to suspend it to a chain

containing similar trifles which hung round her neck, concluding the affair with the gratified look which a young woman might be expected to exhibit on having a pretty miniature of one she loved presented to her. The innocent grace shown in the whole of this fictitious proceeding drew forth exactly that kind of admiration from the company which would be bestowed on a piece of exquisitely-natural acting in a theatre. I suspect, however, it was 'a grace beyond the reach of art.' Dr Darling now ventured on a trying experiment. He bade the lady look at her husband, who, to our apprehension, sat smiling at her. He told her that her lord and master had taken a great dislike to her. She seemed arrested with a sudden sorrow, gazed painfully at her husband, and then we saw her eyes slowly fill with tears. This deception was quickly undone, but only to be followed by one not much less distressing to the patient. She was told that the company were enjoying themselves at her expense: they were all laughing at her. She assumed a proud expression, rose up majestically, and looked round and round the room with an air of contemptuous defiance. On this feeling being banished from her mind, she sat down again. The lecturer, pointing along the floor, said, 'You are fond of flowers—here is a fine flower-garden before you—you see beautiful beds of roses;' and he added the names of other favourites of the English garden. The lady looked, and gradually began to assume a pleased expression, such as she might have manifested if led into the precincts of a Chatsworth or a Kew. She became fully convinced that she saw a flower-garden, although, as she afterwards told us, she never ceased to be aware of the fact that she was sitting in a room. Then Dr Darling affected to pluck flowers and hand them to her. She took them, smelt them, and arranged them in her bosom with the same graceful simplicity which had been manifested in stringing the miniature. 'This is a water-lily,' he said; 'smell it.' She said, 'The water-lily has no smell;' but nevertheless went through the gesture of putting it to her nose, when we remarked that the expression of countenance was suitable to the fact of the inodorousness. The lecturer then told her to look at the fine sunset (we were looking through eastern windows at a heavy gray sky); she beheld a fine sunset accordingly. Then he convinced her that she saw a fine park, and three gentlemen walking in it. 'And here,' he said, 'is a nice horse; come and have a ride upon it.' She moved to the middle of the floor, with the look of one approaching a horse. She stroked the ideal palfrey, and took the bridle reins from Dr Darling's hand. He slightly raised her by the waist, and told her she was now mounted. She then went through the gestures appropriate to riding—got into a rapid movement—leant forward—suddenly clasped her cap at the back of her head, which she felt falling off—and finally stopped, a little exhausted with the exercise, and allowed herself to be in imagination lifted off upon the ground. Finally, after she had been reseated, Dr Darling put a tumbler of water into her hand, and desired her to taste that fine beer. She tasted, and admitted that it was beer. Next he convinced her that it was milk; then it was water, with animalcules driving pell-mell through it. The air of implicit belief in all these cases was perfectly accordant with the presumable feeling. No intentional acting by the highest adept could have been truer to our conceptions of what was proper on each occasion.

The other lady, who was younger, and unmarried, was next placed on a sofa. The lecturer held her hands for a few minutes, looking into her face; he then touched her eyebrows, and made a few other trifling manipulations. It quickly appeared that she had become as obedient to the volition of the lecturer as the first lady had been. On being told that she was sad, she assumed the aspect of a Niobe, forming the

finest possible study for that character. She was then told that her father, who was in the room, was in great affliction. She gazed fearfully at him for a minute, and clasping her hands wildly, threw herself back in a passion of tears. The experimentalist hastened in pity to relieve her from her distress. She smiled with wonder at the strange delusion under which she had been. She was then told that the company were laughing at her. She looked round fiercely, panted with suppressed rage, uttered some exclamations, and twisting her handkerchief like a rope between her hands, plucked at the two ends, as if she would have torn it asunder. In her the passion of wounded self-esteem was more violent than in the other lady, which afforded the lecturer occasion to remark that the demonstrations are more or less peculiar in every case, according to the natural character of the individual. On the whole, there was a somewhat alarming degree of susceptibility on the part of this subject, and at the request of her father the experiments were discontinued. I was assured, nevertheless, that no one had ever been known to be injured even in the slightest degree by undergoing these processes.

While the party was subsequently at lunch, I had a conference with my friend, as well as with the two female patients, in order—I need not say to test the reality of all these demonstrations, for their reality was beyond a question—but to learn what the patients had felt while subjected to the lecturer's will. It appeared that there never had, in any case, been any failure of consciousness. They knew where they were, and by whom they were surrounded. They were fully apprehensive of the wish of Dr Darling to subject them to his will, and anxious to defeat him in his design, my friend particularly so. But their physical powers proved treacherous to their desire, and they were compelled to obey another will than their own. As a last experiment, I requested the operator to try if he could arrest the hand of the married lady in lifting a glass of wine to her lips. He fairly stopped it in mid air. This was twenty minutes after leaving the room in which the experiments had taken place. I afterwards learned that she felt drowsy for a day or two after our *séance*; and perhaps during all that time the lecturer might have re-established his power over her will, without going through any such preliminary process as the gazing upon the disk.

Being no longer a sceptic on this subject, I am disposed to show, if possible, that others may safely abandon the same position. What, after all, is the phenomenon professedly effected? No more than a play upon the human will. Have we not heard all our lives of people being set a-yawning by a wag who merely began yawning in their view? Have we not heard of men who were forced to imitate every gesture of some one in their company? Have we not all heard of the English officer in the Seven Years' War, whom his companions could converse with in his sleep, and convince of anything? They even conducted him through the whole process of a duel, till the ideal firing of the pistols awakened him by its fancied noise.* We are also familiar with manias for dancing, which took possession of large circles of people during the middle ages, and which clearly presuppose some possible condition in which the human will loses its usual force and tension. In the diseases of hysteria, epilepsy, and catalepsy, there are phenomena quite as extraordinary and wonderful as those of so-called 'electrobiology,' and indeed, to all appearance much allied to them, the only peculiarity here being, that, under a slight access of stupor, artificially brought on, they can be produced at will in a healthy person. It therefore appears to be not very reasonable to treat these experiments with a determined incredulity. I have been

gratified to find a more rational spirit in a philosopher of the highest reputation—the present president of the British Association, Sir David Brewster. In a letter written to a newspaper after some experiments which he had witnessed, he says—'The gentlemen present were the Duke of Argyll, Mr Callander of Craigforth, Colonel Gore Brown of the 21st Fusiliers, Professor Gregory, and myself; and I believe they were all as convinced as I was that the phenomena which we witnessed were real phenomena, and as well established as any other facts in physical science. The process by which the operator produces them—the mode by which that process acts upon the mind of the patient—and the reference of the phenomena to some general law in the constitution of man—may remain long unknown; but it is not difficult to see in the recent discoveries of M. Dubois Reymond and M. Matteucci, and in the laws which regulate the relative intensity of the external and internal impressions of the nerves of sensation, some not very indistinct indications of that remarkable process by which minds of peculiar sensibility are temporarily placed under the dominion of physical influences developed and directed by some living agent.'*

Perhaps there would be less incredulity in regard to these wonders if their real character were steadily contemplated. There is a great distinction, I would say, to be drawn between such phenomena and certain so-called modern miracles. When a man tells me that a picture of a wounded person has bled at the painted wounds, I readily feel assured that he speaks of a physical impossibility, and that the appearances, if any, have been produced by trick. But when I am told that one person has established a peculiar control over another, I see nothing like an impossibility, because the alleged facts appear in some relation, although an obscure one, to phenomena already recognised. There would also be more candour towards such phenomena as are here described, if men were studious of truth alone. But some men feel that they cannot afford to incur the charge of a too ready faith in novelties. They have medical or scientific reputations to be nursed, and which they must save from any risk of damage. Some men qualified to serve science will take no step which would tend to confer a glory upon one of whose doings in science they are jealous or contemptuous. The lovers of truth for its own sake are a few, and they are not always willing to take the martyrdom attending a priority of acknowledgment. Thus all such discoveries as these have their period of struggle, with the whole band of good reputations embattled against them. They may be consoled, however—when they at length triumph, it will be not merely admitted by former opponents, but *asserted*, that all this was perfectly well known long ago.†

THE PORTLAND PRISON.

At the extreme south-west corner of the county of Dorset, there is at the present moment being silently worked out a problem which has perplexed some of the greatest statesmen, and grieved some of the most enlightened philanthropists of this country. The problem is not, 'What shall we do with our convicts?' but, 'Can we so measure their punishment, that while justice shall be satisfied and crime expiated, the criminals themselves may be reclaimed to society without being a burden on the state?'

The island of Portland, in which this interesting experiment is at present on trial, presents some singular natural features. An immense mass of stone, upwards of eight miles in circumference, has been thrown up to, in some places, a height of 490 feet. Upon this

* Edinburgh Evening Courant, Dec. 28, 1860.

† We deem it right to say that the above article proceeds from such a source as to leave no kind of doubt regarding the fidelity of the narration.—Ed.

* Abercromby on the Intellectual Powers; 5th edition, p. 278.

rock have existed for a long period a peculiar race of people, whose chief employment has been that of 'hewers of stone,' and who, though distant only four miles from a fashionable watering-place, have ever preserved the character of a hardy, uneducated, retired class of men, who have never married out of their island. This strange 'table-land' is connected with Weymouth by the Chesil beach. For a distance of fully ten miles this beach, composed of myriads of pebbles, extends; forming an unbroken line of spray and foam to that extent whenever the waters of the Atlantic lash its shores. The island is said to produce a large quantity of wild arrow-root, and the little bird called the wheat-eat, in great abundance. Its diminutive race of sheep is highly prized by the gourmands of the adjoining watering-place.

The Portlanders continued very quietly to pursue their occupation of quarrying, until the commencement of the great breakwater at Cherbourg excited the apprehensions of those who had hitherto relied on our naval supremacy. Fears of invasion led to the idea of constructing a breakwater to protect the shipping of Weymouth; but though long agitated, the project did not assume a practical form till very recent times. It was so late as May 1847 that the bill for the construction of a breakwater received the royal assent. It is probable that the idea of making Portland a receptacle for convicts did not occur to the government until the applicability of convict labour became apparent; when, the peculiar isolated situation of Portland, its desolate aspect, its contiguity to a military depot, added to the loudly-expressed dislike of the colonies to the reception of convicts, and the suspension of transportation for a period, owing to the want of demand for convict labour—combined to lead the government to the design of making Portland a large convict establishment, and of performing the great national work in hand by convict labour. Accordingly, in the summer of 1847, Lieutenant-colonel Jebb, surveyor-general of prisons, was directed to prepare the necessary plans, and in November 1848 an establishment capable of receiving 850 prisoners was opened at Portland. On the 25th of July in the following year, the first stone of the breakwater was laid by his Royal Highness Prince Albert.

It will now be necessary to take a brief glance at the mode in which transportation is at present carried out. Probably many of our readers are already aware that a convict is now subjected to three distinct stages of punishment. The first is passed in separate confinement in Millbank, Pentonville, or one of the jails fitted for the reception of convicts; the second is to be passed at Portland where practicable, or at one of the dock-yards; and the third stage is to be undergone in one of the colonies, with a ticket of leave. No sooner is a prisoner made acquainted with the punishment awarded for his offence, than the law humanely places in his hands the power of commutation. The longest period of detention in separate confinement is eighteen months; but this term the prisoner may by good conduct materially shorten, and in some cases convicts sentenced to only seven years' transportation may avoid altogether the second stage, and be passed from Millbank or Pentonville direct to the colonies. Here, again, in this second stage the convict has his lot placed very much at his own disposal. A prisoner under sentence of eighteen years' transportation would, under ordinary circumstances, be detained six and a-half years, which term, by good conduct, he might reduce to three years; and even a 'life' convict may obtain, by exemplary behaviour, the comparative freedom of a ticket of leave, after undergoing a year's probation, and serving six years on public works.

The distinctive features of the discipline of the Portland prison are—'a combination of associated labour by day, with separation by means of cells at night;' and

a system of rewards and encouragements to convicts, which, if they are not as hardened as the stone they work upon, cannot but stimulate them to industry and good conduct. Respecting the Combined, Separate, and Associated Systems, the intelligent governor of the establishment, Captain Whitty, observes, 'When in their cells, strict silence is enforced upon the prisoners; but during the hours of labour (which is always carried on under the immediate superintendence of the prison officers), they are allowed to converse to such an extent as not to interrupt the progress of their work. The effect of maintaining this greater degree of restraint, while actually within the prison walls, is to cause the convicts to proceed without unwillingness to their daily labour, as relieving them from the irksomeness of separation, of which they have had so much experience during the previous probationary period of their sentences. The frequent recurrence of this restraint acts also as a wholesome check on the natural tendency of the labour outside the walls to relax strict prison discipline.'

It might be feared that the Associated System would render nugatory the effects of the previous separate confinement, but (to say nothing of the total impossibility of carrying out any other system upon such works as the Portland Breakwater) it must be borne in mind that the prisoners are not confined together in yards, or left to spend their time in idleness, but are actively and steadily kept at work in the open air and in daylight, under the watchful supervision of the prison officers. The appalling vices that have brought condemnation on the Associated System have been emphatically 'deeds of darkness.' But upon this point a competent authority has, even while we are writing, spoken out in words of most significant import. 'I could not have believed,' says the Ordinary of Newgate, in his Report for 1850—'I could not have believed, had I not witnessed its results, how very important an effect is produced in prison discipline by the mere introduction of light. As a matter, not of luxury to the prisoners, but of supervising influence, its effects are most striking. I have referred to the improved habits and manners of convicts by merely keeping them at light and easy work; but this effect is less apparent than the alteration now visible in the sleeping wards of transports, remembering what it used to be when they slept in darkness, and what may now be seen under the beneficial influence of light. If one-fiftieth part of what has been told me by convicts sentenced to imprisonment in the hulks be true (and I admit and allow for the doubtful nature of such testimony), the transport wards of Newgate were, at their worst condition, palaces of light compared with the dark designs and deeds of those dissolute and lost men when they were shut up in darkness of mind and body.'

We come now to the system of rewards and encouragements. The old saying, 'One person may lead a horse to the water, but twenty cannot force him to drink,' was felt in all its force when the associated labour system was commenced. Upon the treadmill the most obstinate must work, and at the accustomed rate; but in open-air work there is no stimulating power beyond a convict's own free will. To create this stimulant, a careful record is kept in a 'conduct book' of the prisoner's behaviour; and he is provided with a badge, which is worn upon the arm, and shifted every month. By means of a few figures and a single letter, it expresses—the length of transportation, the time spent in prison, and whether the conduct has been good or bad. To a prisoner not entirely irreclaimable, the mere exhibition of this badge among his fellows cannot be without its effects. If it record a continued course of good conduct, the wearer may be supposed to feel an honourable pride in displaying it; while, if it chronicle misconduct, there are few who could exhibit it without some feeling of shame. The system, we are

told, works well, and even ill-conducted prisoners evince a desire to regain a lost good-conduct mark.

But the most stimulating regulation is the division of the prisoners into classes, with a direct inducement in money. The Lords of the Admiralty having allowed the sum of 1s. per week for the work of each convict employed on the breakwater, the convict, after being thoroughly impressed with the fact that, as a felon, he has no claim to any part of his earnings, is advised that, as an incentive to industry, he may receive, if a first-class man, 9d. per week; if a second-class man, 6d.; if a third-class man, 4d.; and that, in addition, a gratuity of from 3d. to 6d. per week will be allowed for 'extra exertion.' The total allowance to a prisoner is placed to his credit, and forwarded to the governor of the colony to which he is sent, to be applied for his benefit as that authority shall think fit. Under this humane system, therefore, a prisoner, besides the power of shortening his sentence, is enabled by industry and good conduct to amass a fund which, with the aid of a ticket of leave, may place him in a situation of comparative independence. In certain cases the government adds the farther inducement of half the passage money of wives and families wishing to join the convict in the colonies.

With all this care for the reclamation of the convict, there still exist the dangers of an overdone philanthropy. The reproach has been but too truly cast upon our prison reformers, that they have made the situation of a felon preferable to that of an independent labourer, or of the inmate of a workhouse. Too often he is fed and lodged better than the pauper, to whom the only stimulant offered is the rendering of his lot as uncomfortable as possible. It cannot be denied that there is much of truth in the assertion, that a felon is better treated than a pauper, for under no circumstances is a money reward offered to the latter, no matter how industrious or well-conducted he may be. The objection cannot entirely be removed, but in order to meet it in some measure, it is provided that prisoners of the first and second class may be removed to the lowest class for misconduct; that prisoners who habitually misbehave themselves are liable to be sent back to separate confinement, or to be removed to the horrors of a penal settlement; and that, after an uninterrupted course of good conduct in this country, they may still, for ill conduct on the voyage or at the colony, forfeit all the indulgences of a ticket of leave, and be sent back again to penal discipline.

The daily routine observed at Portland is as follows:—The prisoners rise in summer at five o'clock, in winter half an hour later; and when the weather and the season permit, work until eight o'clock. Prayers are said immediately before breakfast, which occupies half an hour. Labour is then resumed until the dinner hour, twelve o'clock; and again until supper-time, which varies with the season, from four to six o'clock. After this they attend evening prayer, and hear a daily lecture, retiring to rest at eight o'clock at all seasons of the year. Each prisoner attends the day-school half a day in each week, and the evening school in turn. The scholars are divided into twelve classes. 'Each class is opened by singing a hymn, after which a collect is repeated by one of the masters; and then a chapter in the Bible is read, verse by verse, by the prisoners.' The first hour is passed in writing, the second in reading history or geography, and the remaining hour in *visé voce* questions on arithmetic, &c. The whole concludes with the singing of a hymn and a blessing.

A question of some importance to the politico-economist will be, 'Does the labour of the convicts defray the cost of their maintenance?' In a new establishment like Portland it is almost impossible at present to separate the preliminary from the annual expenses. The estimates for the present year (1850-1) were—

expenses, L.19,800; value of labour, L.15,000. The estimated number of convicts is 840; but allowances must be made for sick, &c. It is computed that, in 1849, the value of the labour actually performed was over L.16 per convict. In the present estimates, their value is put at L.18 per man. It does not appear, therefore, that the government will ever realise a profit by convict labour; nor does it seem desirable that it should do so. Compared, however, with the remunerative system of former times, the advantages are too manifest to be insisted on.

Connected with this is a question of a somewhat serious nature—'How will the system be carried out when the breakwater is completed? Other harbours of refuge and government works may be required, but where will be found a *locale* so favourable as Portland?' To this it may be answered, that the works at Portland will of necessity last several years; and that, when they are finished, the convicts may be employed in quarrying and preparing stone for the many government works that will always be in hand. And if it is objected that the employment of convict labour is a discouragement and injustice to the honest artisan, it may be urged that the labour superseded by the employment of convicts at Portland is of a difficult and even dangerous character, and that it is but poorly remunerated. Surely it is wiser and more economical, if convict labour must interfere with free labour, that it should supersede laborious and badly-paid employments here, rather than be sent abroad to flood remunerative and pleasant occupations in our colonies.

If we might venture a suggestion, we would advise the conversion into single cells of the Associated rooms, of which there are two, provided with fifty hammocks a piece.

It would be superfluous to comment upon the evident improvement which the humane and merciful system observed at Portland effects in our convict discipline. Even in our own day, the hulks and the convict-ward were described as the nearest approach to a 'hell upon earth.' Speaking of the recent visit of the Home Secretary to the Portland prison, a gentleman who holds a high official position remarked to the writer of this article—'I remember the time when it was positively dangerous to go among convicts. Now they are so changed, that you may go in among the gangs, and receive such civility that you can hardly believe you are in the company of convicted felons!' If the effect of the new system were merely a better behaviour on the convicts' part while in confinement, that alone—the fearful scenes in our old jails remembered—would be worth obtaining; but there is every reason to believe that while reclaiming, and even Christianising the present generation of felons, we are placing a check upon demoralisation that will produce a healthy influence hereafter.

THE LAST OF THE FIDDLERS.

A VILLAGE TALE.

BY BERTHOLD AUERBACH.*

THE midnight silence of the village is broken by unusual clattering sounds—a horse comes galloping along at the top of his speed, his rider crying aloud, 'Fire—fire! Help, ho! Fire!' Away he rides straight to the church, and presently the alarm-bell is heard pealing from the steeple.

It is no easy matter to arouse the harvest folks, after a hard day's work, from their first sound sleep: there they lie, stretched as unconsciously as the corn in the fields which they have reaped in the sweat of their brow. But wake they must—there is no help for it. The stable-boys are the first on the alert—every one

* Communicated in the present form by a friend of Auerbach.

anxious to win the reward which, time out of mind, has been given to the person who, on occasion of a fire, is the first to reach the engine-house with harnessed horses. Here and there a light is seen at a cottage lattice—a window is opened—the men come running out of doors with their coats half drawn on, or in their shirt sleeves. The villagers all collect about the market-house, and the cry is heard on all sides, 'Where is it? Where's the fire?'

'In Eibingen.'

Question and answer were alike unneeded, for in the distance, behind the dark pine-forest, the whole sky was illumined with a bright-red glow, in the stillness of the night, like the glow of the setting sun; while every now and then a shower of sparks rose into the air, as if shot out from a blast-furnace.

The night was still and calm, and the stars shone peacefully on the silent earth.

The horses are speedily put to the fire-engine, the buckets placed in a row, a couple of torches lighted, and the torch-bearers stand ready on either side holding on to the engine, which is instantly covered with men.

'Quick! out with another pair of horses! two can't draw such a load!'—'Down with the torches!'—'No, no; they're all right—'tis the old way!'—'Drive off for Heaven's sake—quick!'

Such-like exclamations resounded on all sides. Let us follow the crowd.

The engine, with its heavy load, now rolls out of the village, and through the peaceful fields and meadows: the fruit-trees by the road-side seem to dance past in the flickering light; and soon the crowd hurries, helter-skelter, through the forest. The birds are awakened from sleep, and fly about in affright, and can scarcely find their way back to their warm nests. The forest is at length passed, and down below, in the valley, lies the hamlet, brightly illumined as at noon-day, while shrieks and the alarm-bell are heard, as if the flames had found a voice.

See! what is yonder white, ghost-like form, in a fluttering dress, on the skirts of the forest? The wheels creak, and rattle along the stony road—no sounds can be distinguished in the confusion. Away! help! away!

The folks were now seen flying from the village with their goods and chattels—children in their bare shirts and with naked feet—carrying off beds and chairs, pots and pans. Has the fire spread so fearfully, or is this all the effect of fright?

'Where's the fire?'

'At Hans the Fiddler's.'

And the driver lashed his horses, and every man seemed to press forward with increased ardour to fly to the succour.

As they approached the spot, it was clearly impossible to save the burning cottage; and all efforts were therefore directed to prevent the flames extending to the adjoining houses. Just then everybody was busied in trying to save a horse and two cows from the shed; but the animals, terrified by the fire, would not quit the spot, until their eyes were bandaged, and they were driven out by force.

'Where's old Hans?' was the cry on all sides.

'Burnt in his bed to a certainty,' said some. Others declared that he had escaped. Nobody knew the truth.

The old fiddler had neither child nor kinsfolk, and yet all the people grieved for him; and those who had come from the villages round about reproached the inhabitants for not having looked after the fate of the poor fellow. Presently it was reported that he had been seen in Urban the smith's barn; another said that he was sitting up in the church crying and moaning—the first time he had been there without his fiddle. But neither in the barn nor in the church was old Hans to be found, and again it was declared that he had been burnt to death in his house, and that his groans had

actually been heard; but, it was added, all too late to save him, for the flames had already burst through the roof, and the glass of the windows was sent flying across the road.

The day was just beginning to dawn when all danger of the fire spreading was past; and leaving the smouldering ruins, the folks from a distance set out on their return home.

A strange apparition was now seen coming down the mountain-side, as if out of the gray mists of morning. In a cart drawn by two oxen sat a haggard figure, dressed in his bare shirt, and his shoulders wrapped in a horse-cloth. The morning breeze played in the long white locks of the old man, whose wan features were framed, as it were, by a short, bristly, snow-white beard. In his hands he clutched a fiddle and fiddle-stick. It was old Hans the village fiddler. Some of the lads had found him at the edge of the forest, on the spot where we had caught a glimpse of him, looking like a ghostly apparition, as we rattled past with the engine. There he was found standing in his shirt, and holding his fiddle in both his hands pressed tightly to his breast.

As they drew near the village, he took his fiddle and played his favourite waltz. Every eye was turned on the strange-looking man, and all welcomed his return, as if he had risen from the grave.

'Give me a drink!' he exclaimed to the first person who held out a hand to him. 'I'm burnt up with thirst!'

A glass of water was brought him.

'Bah!' cried the old man; 'twere a sin to quench such a thirst as mine with water: bring me some wine! Or has the horrid red cock drunk up all my wine too?'

And again he fell to fiddling lustily, until they arrived at the spot of the fire. He got down from the cart, and entered a neighbour's cottage. All the folks pressed up to the old fiddler, tendering words of comfort, and promising that they would all help him to rebuild his cottage.

'No, no!' replied Hans; 'tis all well. I have no home—I'm one of the cuckoo tribe that has no resting-place of its own, and only now and then slips into the swallow's nest. For the short time I have to live, I shall have no trouble in finding quarters wherever I go. I can now climb up into a tree again, and look down upon the world in which I have no longer anything to call my own. Ay, ay, 'twas wrong in me ever to have had anything of my own except my precious little fiddle here!'

No objection was raised to the reasoning of the strange old man, and the country-folks from a distance went their ways home with the satisfaction of knowing that the old fiddler was still alive and well. Hans properly belonged to the whole country round about: his loss would have been a public one: much as if the old linden-tree on the Landeck Hill close by had been thrown down unexpectedly in the night.

Hans was as merry as a grig when Caspar the smith gave him an old shirt, the carpenter Joseph a pair of breeches—and so on. 'Well, to be sure, folks may now say that I carry the whole village on my back!' said he; and he gave to each article of dress the name of the donor. 'A coat indeed like this, which a friend has worn nicely smooth for one, fits to a T. I was never at my ease in a new coat; and you know I used always to go to the church, and rub the sleeves in the wax that dropped from the holy tapers, to make them comfortable and fit for wear. But this time I'm saved the trouble, and I'm for all the world like a new-born babe who is fitted with clothes without measuring. Ay, ay, you may laugh; but 'tis a fact—I'm new born.'

And in truth it quite seemed so with the old man: the wild merriment of former years, which had slumbered for a while, all burst out anew.

A fellow just now entered who had been active in extinguishing the fire, and having his hand in the work, had been at the same time no less actively engaged in quenching a certain internal fire—and in truth, as was plain to be seen, more than was needed. On seeing him, the old fiddler cried out, 'By Jove, how I envy the fellow's jollity!' All the folks laughed; but presently the merriment was interrupted by the entrance of the magistrate with his notary, come to investigate the cause of the fire, and take an inventory of the damage.

Old Hans openly confessed his fault. He had the odd peculiarity of carrying about him, in all his pockets, a little box of lucifer matches, in order never to be at a loss when he wanted to light his pipe. Whenever any one called on him, and wherever he went, his fingers were almost unconsciously playing with the matches. Often and often he was heard to exclaim, 'Provoking enough! that these matches should come into fashion just as I am going off the stage. Look! a light in the twinkling of an eye! Only to think of all the time I've lost in the course of my life in striking a light with the old flint and steel—days, weeks, ay, years!'

The fire had, to all appearances, originated with this child's play of the old man, and the magistrate said with regret that he must inflict the legal penalty for his carelessness. 'However, at all events 'tis well 'tis no worse,' he added; 'you are in truth the last of the fiddlers; in our dull, plodding times, you are a relic of the past—of a merry, careless age. 'Twould have been a grievous thing if you had come to such a miserable end.'

'Look ye, your worship, I ought to have been a parson,' said Hans; 'and I should have preached to the folks after this fashion:—"Don't set too much store on life, and it can't hurt you; look on everything as foolery, and then you'll be cleverer than all the rest. If the world was always merry—if folks did nothing but work and dance, there would be no need of schoolmasters—no need of learning to write and read—no parsons—and (by your worship's pardon) no magistrates. The whole world is a big fiddle—the strings are tuned—Fortune plays upon them; but some one is wanted to be constantly screwing up the strings; and this is a job for the parson and magistrate. There's nothing but turning and screwing, and turning and scraping, and the dance never begins."'

The fiddler's tongue went running on in this way, until his worship at length took a friendly leave of him. We shall, however, remain, and tell the reader something of the history of this strange character.

It is now nearly thirty years since the old man first made his appearance in the village, just at the time when the new church was consecrated. When he first came among the villagers, he played for three days and three nights almost incessantly the maddest tunes. Superstitious folks muttered one to another that it must be Old Nick himself who could draw such spirit and life from the instrument, as never to let any one have rest or quiet any more than he seemed to require it himself. During the whole of this time he scarcely ate a morsel, and only drank—but in potent draughts—during the pauses. Often it seemed as if he did not stir a finger, but merely laid the fiddlestick on the strings, and magic sounds instantly came out of them, while the fiddle-bow hopped up and down of itself.

Hey-day! there was a merrymaking and piece of work in the large dancing-room of the 'Sun.' Once, during a pause, the hostess, a buxom, portly widow, cried out, 'Hold hard, fiddler; do stop—the cattle are all quarrelling with you, and will starve if you don't let the lads and girls go home and feed them. If you've no pity on us folks, do for goodness' sake stop your fiddling for the sake of the poor dumb creatures.'

'Just so!' cried the fiddler: 'here you can see how man is the noblest animal on the face of the earth; man alone can dance—ay, dance in couples. Hark

ye, hostess, if you'll dance a turn with me, I'll stop my fiddlestick for a whole hour.'

The musician jumped off the table. All the bystanders pressed the hostess, till at length she consented to dance. She clasped her partner tight round the waist, whilst he kept hold of his fiddle, drawing from it sounds never before heard; and in this comical manner, playing and dancing, they performed their evolutions in the circle of spectators; and at length, with a brilliant scrape of his bow, he concluded, embraced the hostess, and gave her a bouncing kiss, receiving in return a no less hearty box on the ear. Both were given and taken in fun and good temper.

From that time forward the fiddler was domiciled under the shade of the 'Sun.' There he nestled himself quietly, and whenever any merrymaking was going on in the country round-about, Hans was sure to be there with his fiddle; but he always returned home regularly; and there was not a village nor a house, far and wide around, in which there was more dancing, than in the hostelry of the portly landlady of the 'Sun.'

The fiddler comported himself in the house as if he belonged to it; he served the guests (never taking any part in out-of-doors work), entertained the customers as they dropped in, played a hand at cards occasionally, and was never at a loss in praising a fresh tap. 'We've just opened a new cask of wine—only taste, and say if there's not music in wine, and something divine!' Touching everything that concerned the household, he invariably used the authoritative and familiar *we*:—'*We* have a cellar fit for a king; '*Our* house lies in every one's way; and so forth.

Hans and his fiddle, as a matter of course, were at every village-gathering and festivity; and the people of the country round-about could never dissociate in their thoughts the 'Sun' inn and Hans the fiddler. But possibly the hostess considered the matter in a different light. At the conclusion of the harvest merrymaking she took heart and said—'Hans, you must know I've a liking for you; you pay for what you eat; but wouldn't you like for once to try living under another roof? What say you?'

Hans protested that he was well enough off in his present quarters, and that he felt no disposition to neglect the old proverb of 'Let well alone.' The landlady was silent.

Weeks went over, and at length she began again—'Hans, you wouldn't do anything to injure me?'

'Not for the world!'

'Look ye—'tis only on account of the folks hereabouts. I would not bother you, but you know there's a talk— You can come back again after a month or two, and you'll be sure to find my door open to you.'

'Nay, nay, I'll not go away, and then I shall not want to come back.'

'No joking, Hans—I'm in earnest—you must go.'

'Well, there's one way to force me: go up into my room, pack my things into a bundle, and throw them into the road: otherwise I promise you I'll not budge from the spot.'

'You're a downright good-for-nothing fellow, and that's the truth; but what an I to do with you?'

'Marry me!'

The answer to this was another box on the ear; but this time it was administered much more gently than at the dance. As soon as the landlady's back was turned, Hans took his fiddle and struck up a lively tune.

From time to time the hostess of the 'Sun' recurred to the subject of Hans's removal, urging him to go; but his answer was always ready—always the same—'*Marry me!*'

One day in conversation she told him that the police would be sure soon to interfere and forbid his remaining longer, as he had no proper certificate; and so forth. Hans answered not a word, but cocking his hat know-

ingly on the left side, he whistled a merry tune, and set out for the castle of the count, distant a few miles. The village at that time belonged to the Count von S—.

That evening, as the landlady was standing by the kitchen fire, her cheeks glowing with the reflection from the hearth, Hans entered, and without moving a muscle of his face, handed to her a paper, and said, 'Look ye, there's our marriage-license; the count dispenses with publishing the bans. This is Friday—Sunday is our wedding-day!'

'What do you say, you saucy fellow? I hope'—

'Hollo, Mr Schoolmaster!' interrupted Hans, as he saw that worthy functionary passing the window just at that instant. 'Do step in here, and read this paper.'

Hans held the landlady tight by the arm, while the schoolmaster read the document, and at the conclusion tendered his congratulations and good wishes.

'Well, well—with all my heart!' said the landlady at length. 'Since 'tis to be so, to tell the truth I've long had a liking for you, Hans; but 'twas only on account of the prate and gossip'—

'Sunday morning then?'

'Ay, ay—you rogue.'

A merry scene was that, when on the following Sunday morning Hans the Fiddler—or, to give him his proper style, Johann Grubenmüller—paraded to church by the side of his betrothed, fiddling the wedding-march, partly for his self-gratification, partly to give the ceremony a certain solemn hilarity. For a short space he deposited his instrument on the baptismal font; but the ceremony being ended, he shouldered it again, struck up an unusually brisk tune, and played so marvellously, that the folks were fairly dying with laughter.

Ever since that time Hans resided in the village, and that is as much as to say that mirth and jollity abode there. For some years past, however, Hans was often subject to fits of dejection, for the authorities had decreed that there should be no more dancing without the special permission of the magistrates. Trumpets and other wind-instruments supplanted the fiddle, and our friend Hans could no longer play his merry jigs, except to the children under the old oak-tree, until his reverence, in the exercise of his clerical powers, forbade even this amusement, as prejudicial to sound school discipline.

Hans lost his wife just three years ago, with whom he had lived in uninterrupted harmony. Brightly and joyously as he had looked on life at the outset of his career, its close seemed often clouded, sad, and burthen-some, more than he was himself aware. 'A man ought not to grow so old!' he often repeated—an expression which escaped from a long train of thought that was passing unconsciously in the old man's mind, in which he acknowledged to himself that young limbs and the vigour of youth properly belonged to the careless life of a wandering musician. 'The hay does not grow as sweet as it did thirty years ago!' he stoutly maintained.

The new village magistrate, who had a peculiarly kind feeling towards old Hans, set about devising means of securing him from want for the rest of his days. The sum (no inconsiderable one) for which the house was insured in the fire-office was by law not payable in full until another house should be built in its place. It happened that the parish had for a long time been looking out for a spot on which to erect a new schoolhouse in the village, and at the suggestion of the worthy magistrate the authorities now bought from Hans the ground on which his cottage had stood, with all that remained upon it. But the old man did not wish to be paid any sum down, and an annuity was settled on him instead, amply sufficient to provide for all his wants. This plan quite took his fancy; he

chucked at the thought (as he expressed it) that he was eating himself up, and draining the glass to the last drop.

Hans, moreover, was now permitted again to play to the children under the village oak on a summer evening. Thus he lived quite a new life; and his former spirit seemed in some measure to return. In the summer, when the building of the new schoolhouse was commenced, old Hans was rivetted to the spot as if by magic; there he sat upon the timbers, or on a pile of stones, watching the digging and hammering with fixed attention. Early in the morning, when the builders went to their work, they always found Hans already on the spot. At breakfast and noon, when the men stopped work to take their meals, which were brought them by their wives and children, old Hans found himself seated in the midst of the circle, and played to them as they ate and talked. Many of the villagers came and joined the party; and the whole was one continued scene of merriment. Hans often said that he never before knew his own importance, for he seemed to be wanted everywhere—whether folks danced or rested, his fiddle had its part to play; and music could turn the thinnest potato-broth into a savoury feast.

But an unforeseen misfortune awaited our friend Hans, of which the worthy magistrate, notwithstanding his kindness to the old man, was unintentionally the cause. His worship came one day, accompanied by a young man, who had all the look of a genius: the latter stood for some minutes, with his arms folded, gazing at Hans, who was busy fiddling to the workpeople at their dinner.

'There stands the last of the fiddlers of whom I told you,' said the magistrate; 'I want you to paint him—he is the only relic of old times whom we have left.'

The artist complied. At first old Hans resisted the operation stoutly, but he was at length won over by the persuasion of his worship, and allowed the artist to take his likeness. With trembling impatience he sat before the easel, wanting every instant to jump up and see what the man was about. But this the artist would not allow, and promised to show him the picture when it was finished. Day after day old Hans had to sit to the artist, in this state of wonder and suspense, and when at noon he played to the workmen at their meals, his tunes were slow and heavy, and had lost all their former vivacity and spirit.

At length the picture was finished, and Hans was allowed to see himself on canvas. At the first glance he started back in affright, crying out like one mad, 'Donner and Blitz!—the rascal has stolen me!'

From that day forward, when the artist had gone away, and taken the picture with him, old Hans was quite changed: he went about the village, talking to himself, and was often heard to mutter, 'Nailed up to the wall!—stolen! Hans has his eyes open day and night, looking down from the wall—never sleeps, nor eats, nor drinks. Stolen!—the thief!' Seldom could a sensible word be drawn from him; but he played the wildest tunes on his fiddle, and every now and then would stop and laugh, exclaiming, as if gazing at something, 'Ha, ha! you old fellow there, nailed up to the wall, with your fiddle; you can't play—you are the wrong one—here he sits!'

On one occasion the spirit of the old man burst out again: it was the day when the gaily-decked fir bush was stuck upon the finished gable of the new schoolhouse.* The carpenters and masons came, dressed in their Sunday clothes, preceded by a band of music, to fetch 'the master.' The old fiddler, Hans, was the whole day long in high spirits—brisk and gay as in his best years. He sang, drank, and played till late into

* This custom is prettily related in Auerbach's story of 'Ira.'

the night, and in the morning he was found, with his fiddle-bow in his hand, dead in his bed. . . .

Many of the villagers fancy, in the stillness of the night, when the clock strikes twelve, that they hear a sound in the schoolhouse, like the sweetest tones of a fiddle. Some say that it is old Hans's instrument, which he bequeathed to the schoolhouse, and which plays by itself. Others declare that the tones which Hans played *into* the wood and stones, when the house was building, come *out* of them again in the night. Be this as it may, the children are taught in all the new rational methods of instruction, in a building which is still haunted by the ghost of the Last Fiddler.

COTTON—OLD AND NEW TIMES.

A PROPOSAL has lately been made, with perfect gravity, and in a respectable quarter, to supersede the machinery used in the flax and cotton manufacture, and to revert to the good old plans of spinning and weaving by hand—the object of the proposal being, as is alleged, to find employment for the poor. According to this notion, we must go back to a primitive state of things. Every village is to have its few well-paid handloom weavers; in every cottage we are to hear the agreeable sound of the spinning-wheel; by all which the world is to be made very comfortable, and poverty is to be banished out of doors. We assure our readers that this is no joke. A certain class of patriots consider that factory labour is ruining the country, and they kindly and heartily advise such measures to avert the final catastrophe.

It would appear that the last prejudice which a man resigns is a belief in the Golden Age. The most difficult thing to learn is the fact that the world is improving. Our recollection stretches so far back as to remember the era of handlooms; we lived for years in the midst of them; and yet we cannot distinctly say that they were very powerful as engines of social happiness. At the beginning of the present century, cotton and linen weaving were well-paid crafts, perhaps the very best going; and it is quite true that weavers lived well, and that some of them saved money, and were creditable members of society. But it is likewise consistent with our recollection that at that very period of textile prosperity there were hosts of mendicants who begged from door to door, highway robberies innumerable, and the style of living among the humbler classes generally anything but refined or comfortable. If this be true as a general picture of affairs, the Golden Age must retreat to an earlier epoch; and it would serve little purpose to bring back a state of things which clearly failed in its presumed object. Let it be granted that handloom workers were not overpaid, it surely needs no logic to prove that their wages were a tax on the community, and if we can do without this species of taxation, so much the better; because more money is left at our disposal for other things. We may lament that a class of workers should have been reduced to poverty; but it would surely be unreasonable to restore an expensive species of labour that can be performed for us at the most insignificant cost by inanimate materials. As has been sagaciously observed by Mr Burton in his 'Political Economy'—'while the broken-down handloom-weaver believes that he is doomed to labour more than other men, and obtain less, the real calamity of his lot is, that he has never known what true labour is; for if we really and seriously compare it with other efforts of human beings around us, it is an

abuse of words to call the jerking of a stick from side to side, with a few other uniform motions, by the name of labour. A machine does it, and a machine ought to do it: men were made for higher, more intricate, more daring tasks.'

From this moral point of view let us proceed to see what is the actual difference between the produce by hand and by machinery. In the great handloom days, every weaver required to be assisted by a female winder of weft; but if this increased the quantity of employment, it also raised the tax on our pockets. A clever man, so aided, could weave two pieces of fine shirting, each twenty-four yards in length, in six days. A lad, assisted by a girl of fourteen years of age, by superintending power-looms, can now weave about twenty-four pieces of the same kind of cloth. Here are twelve times the produce, and of course so much greater cheapness that the public receives a vast benefit from the change. Had power-looms, therefore, never been invented, is it not probable that cotton cloth would now have been as high-priced as silk, and beyond the reach of the humbler classes? Weaving by hand, however, would have been of easier accomplishment than hand-spinning. In a cotton factory, with a steam-engine of 100 horse-power, there are 50,000 spindles, which are superintended by about 750 persons. The quantity of yarn for weaving produced by this mechanism in a day would extend 62,500 miles in length—being as much as would require the labour of 200,000 persons with the common spinning-wheel. We believe there are now upwards of 2000 such cotton mills in the United Kingdom, giving motion to at least 20,000,000 of spindles—the whole doing the work of 400,000,000 of persons, if estimated by the power of hand-labour.

Now although steam is, for the most part, the moving agency of this vast manufacture, it is not to be assumed that there is not a prodigious amount of employment for workers of both sexes. Five or six years ago the number of persons, young and old, employed in spinning, weaving, bleaching, and other processes in preparing cotton cloth, amounted to 542,000—a number, we should fancy, considerably beyond what were employed in the Golden Age of purely hand-labour and customer-work. But as, besides these, large numbers are incidentally engaged in helping on the manufacture—such as shippers, merchants, machine-makers, and tradesmen—the sum-total amounts to millions. It was calculated that in the payment of wages to the above 542,000 persons, thirteen millions of pounds were dispensed every year. To talk of the advantages of hand-labour in the face of this fact! And, as there are other thirteen millions paid away among proprietors, capitalists, engineers, coal-masters, and others connected with the manufacture, it will be seen that a system so productive must have widely-diffusive effects. Adding £10,000,000 as the cost of the raw material, it would appear that the total value of cotton goods manufactured in the United Kingdom amounts to £36,000,000 per annum. Rather more than two-thirds of this amount, or £26,000,000, are said to be exported, leaving about a third for home consumption. Deducting £10,000,000, as the cost of raw material, from the £26,000,000 of exports, it is evident that the national gain, so far as export is concerned, is the sum of £16,000,000 every year. Let it now for a moment be considered what would be the consequences if this profit from the external trade were cut off. Were we to exterminate all the cotton-mills, and go back to the

much-loved Golden Age, when, by the agency of the spinning-wheel and the loom, there were produced a bare sufficiency of linen shirts for the home population, it is clear that, besides all other inconveniences and losses, we should be losing sixteen millions of money in the form of annual exports. How this deficiency is to be compensated nobody has ventured to explain. Exports are but a reflex of imports. For the sixteen millions of cotton articles sold to foreigners, money, or money's worth, is returned. And so with all other articles. The total of our exports, pretty nearly all manufactures, was in 1849 estimated at £63,000,000; and there were of course imports of one kind or other to the same amount. Wines, teas, sugars, silks, and other foreign articles that minister to the wants of a refined people, not to speak of hard cash, were, directly or indirectly, obtained in exchange; and if the nation, following the crotchet of orators and novelists, chose to revert to processes of hand labour sufficient only for home-supply, it would need at the same time to make up its mind to coarse diet, mean attire, much misery, and probably universal disorganization.

One might laugh at the ignorance, but it is not easy to excuse the ingratitude, which affects to disparage this stupendous manufacture; for if the cotton-mill and power-loom had never been invented, this country, limited in its field of agricultural produce, could never have found means to sustain itself through the marvellous struggles which ushered in the present century, and by which it still sustains its credit. The cotton manufacture may indeed be said to have become a main prop of England's greatness; and in this light we would consider the factory-worker, toiling in obscurity, to be a highly useful and estimable member of society. But how great should be our reverence for the few individuals by whose ingenuity the manufacture came originally into shape! Future times will do the memory of those men justice, when the glittering but barren pageantry of destroyers shall be forgotten.

If the early history of the cotton manufacture was signalised by some surprising efforts of genius, its later progress has developed a not less remarkable degree of spirit in matters of social concern. It is almost trite to observe that the great public movements of recent years have either originated in, or been actively promoted by, the 'men of Manchester.' Casting our eyes back a few centuries, we perceive that the principal figurants in history were individuals high in rank; so much so, that the names of commoners engaged in trading pursuits are scarcely heard of. Things are now wonderfully reversed. Rank rarely takes a lead in anything momentous; and the movements of the day receive their purpose and direction from cotton-spinners. The doctrine of a free intercourse among nations might still have been a dry theory, slumbering in the pages of the political economist, but for the practical 'go-ahead' expostulations of the cotton trade. From the same centre of mental energy there seems likely to come forth the only scheme of national education which can be practically adopted among a people divided by religious differences. And while we now write, a plan for the establishment of public libraries, accessible without cost to all, receives important significance from the spirit in which it is caught up in the cotton metropolis.

Reared from small beginnings, and conducted by men of matchless energy, the cotton manufacture, by its very greatness, is a matter of serious solicitude. Not Lancashire and Lanarkshire alone, the more immediate theatre of its operations, look on its continuance with anxiety; but any derangement in its progress, by disturbing trade, sends a startling throb through the vitals of the whole empire. Every one feels the admonitory pulsation. Some persons allege that they entertain fears on account of the unwelcome condition of the coasts of England. A much more serious ground of

alarm lies in the possibility of a stoppage, or great shortcoming, in the import of raw material, on which the vast structure of the cotton-manufacture is established. Such has been the advance of this manufacture, that latterly the quantity of raw cotton introduced has fallen considerably below the demand. Supply has been decreasing, while consumption has been increasing. All the cotton that Egypt, the West Indies, and some other countries can send, has sunk into insignificance. Our great reliance has centered in the United States, from which there were imported in the year ending September 1850 not less than 1,106,771 bales; and as other European countries draw their chief supplies from the same source, it becomes a delicate question how far the States will be able to meet the growing demand. A deficient crop spreads general consternation. We observe it stated that the diminished crop of the past year raised the market price of raw cotton to England alone by the sum of at least £7,500,000, which is equivalent to 75 per cent. of rise on previous prices. Such enhancements in the cost of the material strain the resources of the manufacturer, limit the production, and damage general commerce. What step should be taken to prevent shortcomings like this, or of a still more serious nature, is the question of the day. The supply of cotton from America is undoubtedly precarious. We fear not interruptions from war. What excites uneasiness is the social condition of the south. The cotton plant is cultivated entirely by the forced labour of slaves, and, with the example of a failure in the free labour of the West Indian negroes, it may be shrewdly guessed that emancipation in the southern states of America would act unpleasantly on the cotton market. There is, indeed, no immediate likelihood of the abolition of American slavery—and the fact on its own merits is anything but a subject of gratulation—but assuredly the day will come when this dismal system will terminate. A sudden conjuncture of circumstances might instantly shatter it in pieces.

On these, as well as on other prudential grounds, it behoves those who are concerned in the public welfare to look ahead; yet, strangely enough, the question of a supply of cotton has never been treated as a thing of vital moment, except by the few who are more directly affected. Very much to their credit, a handful of men in Manchester have occupied themselves with the subject, and gone the length of commissioning a person to inquire into the possibility of procuring sufficient supplies of raw cotton from India. The result of the investigation will be looked for with interest. It is meanwhile gratifying to know, that in the newly-set-up free black republic, Liberia, on the coast of Africa, there is every prospect of raising cotton as good as that of the United States, provided capital be employed in the enterprise. Samples submitted to the Manchester Chamber of Commerce have, we understand, been reported as suitable for a large department of manufactures. In some parts of Australia also, cotton of a good quality may be cultivated. Considering the critical nature of the circumstances, how much more worthy and rational it would be to work out the problem of a future supply of this essential product, than to direct the popular energy into polemical discussions, which tend only to unprofitable discord!

Let no man flatter himself with the notion that the tide of cotton manufacture can be rolled back. We could not revert to the spinning-wheel and handloom, even if it were desirable. Millions are to be provided with food, and obligations of vast amount to be liquidated, only by supporting the mighty fabric of factory labour. Dismal that England is everlastingly to 'pirouette on its great toe'—better return to an age of simplicity. Impossible, dear, well-meaning mediavalists! There is no standing still, and no going back. Our individual and national necessities, our very inborn

aspirations, compel us to keep moving onward. The Englishman's hopes are mortgaged. He stands or falls by—cotton! W. C.

BAB AND BILLY.*

IN these days of locomotive engines it has become something rare to travel by a stage-coach; yet in a few remote districts of England these old-fashioned vehicles may still be seen, pending the completion of an arterial system of railways. The fossil remains of both carriages and horses may possibly amuse and incite to antiquarian research our descendants in the fourth or fifth generation, who will scarcely believe that their clumsy forefathers were content to travel at the rate of poor eight miles per hour. I happened lately to pass through an agricultural district of England in one of these antiquated machines, and as we stopped to change horses in a small country town, a pretty, rosy, well-dressed young woman came out of the inn and asked the coachman if there was a seat.

'All full outside, missus, but there's one inside place.' And opening the door, our future fellow-passenger stepped lightly in.

Our party before consisted, besides myself, of an old gentleman and his wife, a quiet, benevolent-looking pair, who, as they told me, had left their shop in Manchester under their son's care, in order to take a month's holiday, and visit their married daughter in the country, whose three younger children they had never yet seen. Judging from the huge light-looking parcel carefully placed between them, and from whose scanty paper covering peeped out the furry mane of a wooden horse, the bright yellow leathern arm of a wax-doll, a portion of a painted velvet ball, and sundry gear of a like nature, to say nothing of a round solid package on the old lady's lap, labelled 'From T. Richards, Confectioner to her Majesty'—arguing, I say, from these phenomena, there seemed little doubt that the arrival of grandpapa and grandmamma would be joyfully hailed by their juvenile descendants.

Having accepted a pinch of snuff from the old gentleman's silver box, and exchanged with both my companions a few of those original meteorological observations which form the orthodox introduction to every English conversation, we became quite good friends, and had just entered deeply into a discussion on the corn-laws, when tariffs, fixed duties, and sliding-scales were banished from our thoughts by the entrance of the fourth traveller.

A joyous-looking creature she was: twenty-three years old, five years married, and the mother of three children, as, in reply to the kind matronly inquiries of the old lady, she soon informed us. The elderly pair began after a time to converse with her as freely as if she were their own Margaret, and her little ones the three unknown grandchildren, for whose benefit the toy-and-cake trades in Manchester had received such decided encouragement. Not seeing, I suppose, anything very awful in my gray hair, wrinkled cheeks, and spectacles, our young companion chatted away gaily, and told us how anxious she was to reach her home, which she had left for a day or two in order to make some necessary purchases in the town.

'I'm afraid the dairy is going on badly,' she said, 'and then my master must be lonely; and the poor little things, I daresay, are calling out for mamma. Now,' she continued, as we passed a milestone, 'in half an hour we shall reach the cross-roads, where Robert said he would meet me with the children; and old Neptune, the watchdog, and poor Bab, I'll answer for it, will be there too.'

'And who is Bab?' I asked with a smile.

'Ah, sir, if you only saw her!—the most beautiful mare you ever beheld. Her skin is so sleek, her eyes are so bright, and she is as intelligent as any of us here!'

Seeing us smile, our young friend blushed, and continued—'Well, without comparing brutes with human beings, I may say that I love Bab, because I brought her up, and fed her with my own hand, ever since she was foaled. I was almost a child then, and she used to follow me about mother's house just like a dog. When I married, father made her a present to me, and I used to ride her to church and market. I might do anything I pleased with her: a word from me was sufficient to guide her without using either whip or bridle; but to every one else she was as tricky as a kitten, and as vicious as a mule. My husband was quite afraid of her, and, to say the truth, she did not show him the slightest consideration. In process of time it pleased Providence to send us a little boy, and almost before he could walk, Bab became his constant playfellow. The little monkey used to tease her in every way—pull her fetlocks, and strike her with his little whip; a thing she would not endure even from me. When he was creeping between her hoofs, or rolling with her on the litter, she used to treat him as gently, and take as much care not to hurt him, as I could possibly do myself. He used to go with her into the fields, climb on her back, and play with her the livelong day; in short, there never was a more attached pair of friends. It has been just the same with the two little girls who came after our boy.'

'And I daresay,' remarked the old gentleman, as he tapped his snuff-box, 'that Bab will be equally kind to the little boys and girls that are yet to come?'

The happy young mother blushed again, and then with a smile which showed her pearly teeth, she said, addressing the old lady—'Would you like, ma'am, to hear about Bab and her colt?'

'So, then, Bab is a mother?'

'Oh yes: she has the funniest, nicest little foal that can be: the children call him Billy. Every day regularly at dinner-time he and his mother make their appearance at the window, and wait there with their nostrils touching the glass, and their bright eyes fixed on us, until we give them their dessert of potatoes and bread. One day about a fortnight since they did not come as usual. I was just remarking their absence to my husband, when we were startled by a sound of furious galloping, and the next moment in bounded the mare through the open door! Her coat was all rough, and her eyes wild, her body was covered with sweat, and her mouth with foam, while her slender limbs trembled convulsively. She came up close to me, and uttered a most piteous neigh. "Ah, Robert!" cried I, "something must have happened Billy!" "Perhaps so," said he: "I'll go ask the men if any of them know where he is." Poor Bab gave another neigh, and walked towards the door, still keeping her head turned towards me. Seeing that I did not follow her, she came back, seized the skirt of my dress with her teeth, and drew me on. I immediately followed her, and she went on rapidly across the fields, looking back now and then to ascertain that I was following. My husband and one of the labourers came after us; and after walking about half a mile, we came to a deep pond, surrounded by a slippery sloping bank. Down this poor Billy had fallen, and now lay senseless in the water. The soft bank was quite cut up by the hoofs of the mare while making vain efforts to save her foal. It was when she found this impracticable that poor Bab had recourse to us; and now we all set to work to rescue Billy. It was no easy matter to draw out his body; but my husband knowing—kind soul!—how much I loved the two animals, used every possible exertion, and at length brought the unlucky foal to land. But there he lay without breath or motion, and we thought him dead. However, Robert and three men who came

* This is an adaptation, or rather naturalisation, from the French.

to his assistance raised Billy between them, and carried him home. Bab followed them closely with her head down, snuffing at the foal every moment, pushing him gently with her nose, and moaning so piteously, that I could not help weeping myself. As soon as we reached the kitchen I washed Billy in warm water, wrapped him up in blankets, and caused him to be rubbed all over; while my husband gently poured some warm wine down his throat. Suddenly the animal gave a slight start, opened his eyes, and breathed; his mother darted to him, so as almost to upset my husband, and laid her head caressingly on his neck, with just such a look of joy as a human being would give. She then drew back, as though satisfied to leave him to our care. But it was when he stood up, and walked towards her, that it was wonderful to see poor Bab. She regularly wept! I assure you I saw tears falling from her eyes—real tears as large as *that!* said the little woman, holding up the rosy tip of her forefinger.

Just then we came to a place where four roads met: the coach drew up, and our fellow-traveller exclaimed, 'There's Robert and the children!' In an instant she was on the road, embracing her husband, a fine handsome young farmer, and filling six little outstretched hands, as rosy and chubby as her own, with toys, cakes, and comfits. A fine old dog stood by welcoming his mistress after the fashion of his kind, and waiting patiently until it should come to his turn to be noticed. As the last parcel was taken from the boot, a noise of galloping was heard; and while the coach was rapidly driving off, the old gentleman and lady and myself saw a mare and a foal rushing with all possible demonstration of joy towards our pretty fellow-traveller.

'FLUNKY.'

In the middle ages the duties of servants were performed by the young aspirants of chivalry. The page became the squire of the chamber, then of the table, then of the wine-cellar, then of the pantry, then of the stable, and so on, till at length he was developed into the squire of the body, or squire of honour, from which the next step was to knighthood. These employments of squirehood tarnished neither gentility nor manliness; for the young men, who, besides carving the meat and compounding the drinks, waited at table like the modern lackey, danced afterwards with the noble ladies present, and out of doors vied with each other in leaping upon horseback, clothed in armour from head to foot, without touching the stirrup. In like manner neither the name nor the office of varlet (valet) was disdained by the very highest, and thus we read of a prince of the Eastern empire who was styled the Varlet of Constantinople. This noble ancestry may have had some influence upon the character and fortunes of the continental man-servant to this day; for on the continent both the usages and abuses of chivalry survived longer than in England—merging gradually, without being wholly lost, in the new manners of the people. There is, in fact, little or no harshness observable there in the line of distinction between employers and employed; and the stiff, frozen hauteur of an English master is always sure to draw from the Frenchman a stare of wonder, just as it does from the American a roar of laughter.

This haughtiness would be a fair subject for the satirist, but it is so likewise for the sober moralist. It cuts off the natural relationship between man and man. It sunders the connection which is the cement of society, and which enables the good qualities of one class to run into and permeate another. It deprives the servant of all hope of rising in the estimation of his employer beyond his own degree, and thus forces him to look downwards instead of upwards for distinction. It concentrates flunkeydom in an antagonistical com-

munity, imitating in a vulgar way the vices, foibles, vanities, tyrannies, and haughtinesses of the higher states.

The affectation, hauteur, meanness, and rapacity of a certain portion of English servants we set down in great part to the account of the masters; but to suppose that these qualities distinguish them as a class, or distinguish them in a greater degree than they do the employers themselves, is an absurdity which can only pass for the sake of the joke. The opposite qualities are quite as common in the body; and there are even some among us who can discern worth and talent of no ordinary kind beneath the party-coloured coat. Of such persons was the high Tory, Sir Walter Scott. He made the acquaintance, we remember, of a servant who was on a tour in Scotland with his master, and was so much struck with the character of the man—who, by the way, was wholly illiterate—that their intercommunication did not cease at the departure of the travellers. We have ourselves seen a letter from the great novelist to this flunkey, informing him, in terms of fun and sarcasm, of his elevation to the baronetcy. In course of time this man, like many of his compeers, exchanged the service of an individual for that of the public, and stood at his own bar in London, with a white apron round him, doling out three-halfpenny-worths of gin to all comers. While in this situation, we brought him into contact with Lord Brougham, as an ex-flunkey qualified to give certain information on trading matters, which his lordship desired to obtain; when the ex-Chancellor of Great Britain received him not only with cordiality, but distinction, and after a long conversation, by no means confined to business, invited him warmly to call on him as often as he found it convenient.

But it is needless to select individuals either for praise or censure. Everybody knows that the class of male domestic servants can furnish examples of honesty, fidelity, and other virtues, as well as of the opposite vices. What we object to is the part taken by a portion of the press in giving still greater harshness than already exists to the line of distinction between the employers and the employed. 'Give a dog a bad name,' says the proverb, 'and hang him.' Make servants feel that they are an outcast race, say we, and they will very soon deserve to be hanged. Now this, we think, has been done to some extent by the late most offensive practice of employing the word 'flunkey' as typical of all that is mean, servile, and base.

That the deserving members of that class of men whose fortunes have thrown them upon the kind of industry in question—a kind demanded as imperatively as any other by the present form of society—feel keenly the taunts to which they are subjected, there can be no doubt. In evidence of the fact, we reprint the following letter from a footman, as it appeared recently in the *Times* :—

'Many articles having appeared in your paper under the term "Flunkeyana," all depreciatory of poor flunkies, may I be allowed to claim a fair and impartial hearing on the other side? I am a footman, a liveried flunkey, a pampered menial—terms which one Christian employs to another, simply because he is, by the Almighty dispenser of all things, placed, in his wisdom, lower in life than the other. Not yet having seen any defence of servants, may I trust to your candour and your generosity to insert this humble apology for a set of men constrained by circumstances to earn their living by servitude? The present cry seems to be to lower their wages. I will state simply a few broad facts. I am a footman in a family in which I have lived thirteen years. My master deems my services worth 24 guineas a year. The question is, is this too much? I will strike the average of expenditure. I am very economical, it is considered. I find for washing I pay near L.6 a year; shoes, L.4. 16s.; tea and sugar,

L.2, 12s.; wearing apparel, say L.4, 4s.; for books—I am a reader—I allow myself L.1, 7s. You will see this amounts to L.18, 7s. each year. I include nothing for amusement of any kind, but say 13s. yearly. I thus account for L.19 yearly, leaving L.6 for savings. One or two other things deserve, I think, a slight notice. What is the character required of a mechanic or labourer? None. What of a servant? Is he honest, sober, steady, religious, cleanly, active, industrious, an early riser? Is he married? No be to the poor fellow who does not answer yes to this category of requests, save the last! The answer is, Your character does not suit; you will not do for me. Again: does a servant forget himself for once only, and get tipsy?—he is ruined for life. In a word, sir, a thorough servant must be sober, steady, honest, and single; he must never marry, must never be absent from his duties, must attend to his master in sickness or in health, must be reviled, and never reply, must be young, able, good-tempered, and willing, and think himself overpaid if at the year's end he has 5s. to put in his pocket. In old age or sickness he may go to the workhouse, the only asylum open. In youth he has plenty of the best, and can get one service when he leaves another, if his character is good; but when youth deserts him, and age and sickness creep on, what refuge is there for him? No one will have him. He is too old for service, that is his answer. In service he is trusted with valuable articles of every description; and in what state of life, whether servant or artisan, surely he who is placed in situations of trust deserves a trifle more of recompense than is sufficient to pay his way and no more?

This is sensible enough so far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. If the wages of this plaintive John were double or treble the sum he mentions, it would be a proof of his having all the more merit. Wages and value adjust themselves to each other by a law that laughs at nicknames; and if John receives fifty guineas a year from his master, it is simply because there are no other services of the kind as good as his comestable at what is called in the market a lower figure. Servants who are masters of their business are not common; and those who are civil, sober, sharp, untiring, and worthy of unbounded trust, are far from innumerable. If there were a strike of those domestic workmen throughout the kingdom, it would be felt like a stroke of partial paralysis. No amount of wages would fill their places. You could not rig a jury—John in a twelvemonth. We would counsel the letter-writing footmen to give the laughers a dose of political economy, and make them grin in that way. They might then try them at definitions and analogies, and carrying the war boldly into the enemy's quarters, display the word Flunkey like a banner before them.

Who is a flunkey? demands our John belligerent. The soldier, who sells himself, body and soul, to the drill-sergeant; who stands up to be shot at, or runs away, just as he is ordered; who cuts throats when he is able, at the word of command, for lower wages than an Irish labourer cuts corn; and who values the limbs he may leave on the field at no more than the price of well-fashioned timber.

Who is a flunkey? The sailor who, for his miserable mess of pottage, submits to a perpetual voyage of transportation, living as in a prison—only, quote Dr Johnson, with worse company—sleeping in the darkest, narrowest, and filthiest of dungeons, and constantly liable to find himself, on awaking, in contact with such 'strange bedfellows' as rocks, sharks, and tempests.

Who is a flunkey? The politician who yokes himself, with his eyes open, to the car of a party, helping to drag it along

'Thorough muck thorough mire.'

however offensive and suffocating; who bawls himself

hoarse in honour of the sleek idol who holds the reins; who never shrinks from his share of the ancient eggs and decomposed cabbages with which the procession is greeted by the rival party; and who at length drops and dies in the midst of his task without ever having known what it was to live the life or think the thoughts of a freeman.

Who is a flunkey? The fashionist who binds himself, hand and foot, soul and body, in conventionalities which deprive him of all power of thought or action, save at the impulse of others; whose dress, movements, look, manners, habits, affections, emotions, passions, are all matter of tyrannical prescription; and yet who is vain of his fetters, and feels an insane terror at the idea of divesting himself of them for an instant.

Who is a flunkey? The hireling author, who writes what he does not believe, who flatters tastes he despises, who panders to appetites he abhors, who turns the sacred press into a source of dishonest gain; and yet whose highest reward is a crust, a garret, an obscure death, and an undistinguished grave.

From such persons—and they are only a few among a numerous class—respectable servants would do well to keep aloof, except in the way of their business; but ye to whom the name we have so often mentioned is strictly due, if ye should meet in the highways of life with an individual exhibiting such characteristics as these, turn not away from him we beseech you. Give him, for the sake of your mutual sympathy, such countenance as you can: take him by the hand—it will not be cleaner than your own—and shake it warmly and greasily, for he is a Flunkey and a brother!

A TWELVEMONTH IN CALCUTTA.

JEWELS—RAMUN ROY—THE CHURCH—HINDOO FESTIVAL—THE GODDESS KALI—HURRICANE—INDIAN SHERRY-COBBLER.

August 22d.—Some pretty silver filigree ornaments were brought to me to-day from the Parsee whose ladies I had visited—I did not know he was a client. It is not a bad thing to be a lawyer's wife. A pair of diamond ear-rings came not long ago from some one—not handsome ones, yet of value. Either they don't understand the cutting of their stones, or those I have seen are in general inferior specimens, for the jewels worn by the natives do not look so well as jewels look at home, although some of them are of a very large size. Rings are what the gentlemen most affect. The ladies like their bangles and strings of pearls, often discoloured. Diamonds and emeralds appear to be the most fashionable stones. One Parsee merchant I know wears a single pear-shaped pearl in one ear the size of a large bean. He has never yet been able to match it, so the other ear is unadorned.

We were still occupied with my very pretty silver ornaments when Ramun Roy was announced. He does not improve upon acquaintance. His position is indeed a very unpleasant one. He has returned to take no place among his countrymen, for they deny his claim of succession to his patron, he having been too lowly born to be by their laws eligible for adoption by a man of such high caste. And the European society are greatly indisposed to receive him among them. Prejudices on all sides are arrayed against this innovation. We must have lived, seen life, and reflected upon existing circumstances in India before at all becoming able to comprehend the division of ranks, the insurmountable barriers so contumaciously preserved between them, and the courage, and talent, and tact it would require to make even an approach to a more friendly mixture. This will hardly be effected by Ramun Roy, who is pitied or laughed at according to the feelings of those who all join in condemning an ill-concerted experiment.

28th.—We had a pleasant ride this evening with our friend the chaplain, whose just views of what is to be done, and what at present can only be done, in the scheme all good men particularly of his profession must have at heart, always raises my mind for the time above more frivolous objects. Improvement is so slow a work! A little care of the European population would not be amiss, if only as a beginning at the right end of the great labour of Christianising the heathen. The chaplain mentioned that there was a much larger community of the lower orders of our countrymen here than most people allow themselves to be aware of; he has seldom less than three marriages a week to celebrate, reckoning all classes. Who would have thought this? Births and burials in proportion. Full occupation, in short, for an earnest pastor.

September 1st.—How many partridges will fall to-day in England? We mark our time here by the cold, the hot, and the rainy seasons, and by the sessions and the holidays. During this present cooler weather we have been on the Sunday afternoons attending a course of sermons in the Scotch kirk. They have extremely interested us. The preacher seems honest, zealous, fearless; very clear and very concise. We all agree in his doctrines, and we admire his style of delivery; but further we cannot go. There is something so cold, so formal, in that long prayer, said for us and not with us, and so little reverence in the manner of the service, that it does not touch my heart like our own beautiful liturgy. Much of this may be habit. My Presbyterian friends quarrel with our service, so full of repetitions, and it is a pity that our church persists in giving us four separate services in one; the consequence involves repetition, and always produces weariness. But the Presbyterians do no better. They make their one service quite as long as our four, and certainly fill it equally with these repetitions they so much condemn in us, in the face of that command which tells us not to 'use them vainly as the heathen,' and gives us all we want to say in a few comprehensive words, the beautiful simplicity of which we destroy by our vain amplifications.

The overland mail came in to-day, and we had such a bundle of letters! How true that blessed saying, which we must be as far from home as this to feel the full force of—'As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country!' In the East the value of the cold water so increases the signification of this text. Your letter was balm and sunshine—no cloud I should say here—at any rate all that was delightful: George's was a blank! He had used bad ink, and not a word was legible!

10th.—The weather is again very oppressive, and so we are told it will continue for this the last month of the rainy season. We watch for the showers now very anxiously, and a day of rain is rapturously welcomed, the air being always cooler for a short time afterwards. We get up by candlelight, and ride for a short time in the mornings, being determined to do our best to resist the approaching unhealthy season; the next six weeks are said to be the most trying time of all the year to European constitutions. Every day we hear of young men arriving from the up-country stations to go home on sick leave—imprudent, or I believe I may rather say ignorant, young men, unacquainted with the laws of their own nature; and so, for want of thought, preparing for themselves an early death, or years of broken health. The Moydaun is studded with their white tents, poor fellows, many not having left themselves the means to pay for better lodgings.

22d.—We were invited to a nautch to-day—an entertainment got up on occasion of the Dirghah Poojah—which, though curious, was, after all, but a stupid affair, so at least said Arthur, who had been prevailed on to go to it. I did not feel inclined to brave rather a stormy night. This Dirghah Poojah is the festival of

the Earth, or the Creative Deity. The rich Hindoos open their houses in honour of her for three nights, and they spend a great deal of money in illuminating their residences, and decorating them with mirrors, pictures, and fine hangings. Their rooms are crowded by the lower Europeans, and everybody else who cares to see what may be seen of the manners of the natives. All make a point of attending this sort of affair once after first arriving in the country. There are hired dancers, sword-players, and jugglers; and all is conducted most decorously while any European lady remains; afterwards the dances are, I understand, of a description we could not witness. Some persons think this a sufficient cause to deter any woman from appearing at any part of these performances, though due respect has always been paid to propriety during their stay. Others object to attend an idolatrous festival on religious grounds.

I can't make out what form of prayer the Hindoos adopt towards their three deities, for there appears to be no doubt that they worship three in one—that is to say, the attributes of the Creation, the sustaining or the Preserving Energy, and the Destroying Power. The idols which represent these three deities, or these three attributes of one deity, seem to be only used to convey some sort of image to the senses, as was done in the early Christian church, where statues and paintings were employed to stimulate devotional exercises, the result of which contrivance has been in both cases to materialise the spirit and the truth, at least among the ignorant. The Hindoos periodically treat the resemblance of their mother earth with a singular style of devotion, for as soon as all the ceremonies of her festival are over they fling her image into the Ganges.

These holidays are as much enjoyed by us as by the natives. The absence of the latter from the various offices, where they fill the subordinate stations, releases the principals, and Calcutta becomes empty. The great resource at this time is the river. Parties hire boats, and fill them with hams, beer, champagne, and other Anglo-Indian luxuries, and think it pleasure, in the damp heat of the latter rains, to enjoy these dainties in all the cramped discomfort of a boglio.

Oct. 1st.—Poor little Edward has been rather unwell again; he is a very delicate child, too tall for his age a great deal—drawn up beyond his strength in this enervating climate. We all wish that his mother could be prevailed on to send both him and his brother home. She really runs the chance of losing the child by keeping him here; his uncle, the sick partner, is feeling the change of season very much too. They all dined here this evening, and we thought him looking wretched. The only one who doesn't see this is his wife, which seems extraordinary; but I understand it is quite common for those most interested to be the last to take alarm.

4th.—We spent this day in the fort, in the prettiest house of all the many pretty ones we visit in. The view from the drawing-room windows is really beautiful. There is the river, with its shipping and its banks; part of the town comes very well into the landscape; and the garden belonging to the fort, with all its warlike adornments, is an interesting as well as an uncommon foreground. We spent part of the morning in looking over the arsenal, where all is kept in such perfect order as to add very much indeed to the effect; the stores are very complete, and in very large quantities. Amongst other things is the most powerful magnet I ever saw used. We found the artillery quarters very pleasant, although we had to undergo the shock of the evening gun at our ears at sunset.

9th.—Drove this cooler evening to the Kali Ghaut, the place of the black spirit, from whence the name Calcutta. Kali is a she-devil, of the most malignant nature; this is her temple, and here her votaries resort from every part of India, in the hope of propitiating

her favour. We went there along a back road, through a little bazaar, where numbers of the images of this fiend are displayed for sale; and on reaching the temple, were met by fewer priests than are usually in attendance on similar places of worship. We were late on purpose, as we wished the sacrifices to be over before we came, not inclining to wade through the blood of the victims. All traces of this unpleasant ceremony had therefore been washed away. This is a daily task, for every evening an animal is slaughtered at the threshold of this temple, sacred to the goddess of Destruction. Her image was concealed by a screen or curtain, which was withdrawn to disclose a stone scarcely hewn into any sort of shape, illuminated by one rude lantern. A red silk drapery covered this deformed mass, from out of which were thrust four brazen arms, two on each side, one of the lower arms holding a murderous-looking knife. That part of the figure which is meant to represent the countenance is fearfully uncouth and hideous, like nothing in nature. It has three eyes, one being in the middle of the forehead. I never felt so thoroughly ashamed of humanity. To imagine this object worshipped, feared, adored, not by a few ignorant savages, but by thousands of civilised people! The Brahmin who showed it, however, openly ridiculed the profession by which he was content to live. He seemed extremely anxious to appear to advantage to us, by disclaiming any connection with this temple, assuring us he was engaged in the service of some other. He also told us that any money we gave within these walls would be shared among the priests of Kali; he therefore hoped we should remember him outside, and give him some help towards the support of his wife and children, adding, that all the multitude worshipping here must pay a pice a-piece for leave to prostrate themselves at the feet of their goddess. He was a clever man this Brahmin, shrewd enough to play many parts. The crowd around was very disgusting, composed of most of the objects in Calcutta, the deformed, the diseased, all anxious to exhibit their miseries for pice. This is an Indian custom, not without its emulators elsewhere.

13th.—This night we have had the rehearsal of our long-preparing concert. The performers exerted themselves to the utmost, and seemed to give satisfaction to the row of judges who were sitting to detect errors. Really one could have no idea it would have been possible to collect so many amateurs, vocal and instrumental, so much above par. We all did justice afterwards to a gay supper at two round tables, and the evening being very cool, the thermometer down to 76 degrees, after a day of rain in good earnest, we were quite able to enjoy the whole entertainment.

17th.—A hurricane—trees blown down, mat huts scattered about, boats in peril, ships hardly secure, for the Sandheads are very dangerous. This gale is looked upon as a pretty sure forerunner of the cold weather. Ten or a dozen years ago, when the way to keep the European constitution in health in this trying climate was not so well understood as it is now, people used to assemble round a great tree on the Mydaum, upon the 15th of this month of October, to congratulate each other on having survived the sickly season; and then they reckoned up the names of those they missed—often a melancholy list. We must allow something for the more healthy results of modern improvements—there is so much less marsh and so much less jungle around Calcutta now than there was then; but the habits of society have changed for the better too, though there is still much to be done yet in that respect here as elsewhere. At the courts to-day half the place was flooded, the water having poured down in a way that quite defied all preparations for its exit.

22d.—People going home every day—young men hurrying off by the overland route, and families taking

their more quiet but much more lengthy passage by sea. We are in the midst of farewell visits and farewell dinners, and sales of effects, just as it was at the time we landed, and a few weeks after, and as it will be till the cold weather ends. The society of a watering-place is not more fluctuating, for besides this yearly draft from our ranks, a perpetual change is always going on—so many sent away, one after the other, to the upper provinces, others brought down from the out-stations to the presidency. The going home is rather a sad affair, involving some painful partings, unless the life here be over, and the farewell is for good. When it is for health, or for the sake of taking off the children, there are too many regrets left behind.

29th.—There is an enchanting American here just now, a young New-York man, who has come out to see the world in one of the ice-ships. He has taught Cary and me to drink sherry-cobblers. You would have laughed to have seen us, straw in hand, merrily imbibing the cooling restorative just before setting forth on our evening drive. I have improved upon this hint, for you know I don't like those strong wines in any shape. I have got the khansamaun to arrange with the confectioner to have a lemon ice ready for me as we pass to the Course; and I have no doubt that the practice will soon become general, though as yet we are rather quizzed about it. Ice is a fine tonic, and most certainly we have felt invigorated by the small glass we take of it at this hour. We enjoy our drive doubly, and we make a far better dinner on returning home than we used to do. Wont it be amusing to see the long file of carriages, each stopping regularly before this little shop—the languid inmates just rousing sufficiently to receive the freezing welcome, and driving off again, all actually alive after such a perfect refreshment? This will come, I am certain: we have made some proselytes already. Our straws will be to us what the pipe is to the Hindoo; but I doubt whether we shall ever make use of them as gravely. At present the gaiety of our party rather scandalises the uninitiated. Even Edward laughs.

WARNING TO AMERICAN IMMIGRANTS.

A warning, which, for the public benefit, we repeat, has been given to intending American immigrants by a correspondent of the 'Times,' writing from New York. The warning is to avoid falling into the hands, or being influenced by the advice, of certain parties who waylay the immigrant. At New York, where these wretches pursue their dishonest and evil practices, they are generally styled "runners," but falsely style themselves "licensed runners," and are numerously employed by the proprietors of lodging-houses and forwarding-offices to go on board immigrant ships on arrival, where they entice the passengers to accompany them on shore, when they are turned over to the tender mercies of the principals in this nefarious trade. Every inducement is held out for detaining them, and every impediment put in the way of their departure for the country as long as their money lasts. When this can be delayed no longer, they are "forwarded," as it is termed, in the direction they wish to travel. If their means are ample, they are furnished with a ticket to take them the whole distance at an apparently low cost, but in reality at double or treble the price for which they could themselves have purchased it. If, on the contrary, they have been swindled out of nearly all their slender resources, a ticket is provided, which they are told will take them the entire distance, but which, in process of time, they find to their sorrow only takes them far enough to get them out of the way, and prevent the possibility of their return. The system is as complete as it is wicked. It extends even to the employment of agents, who are sent over to be fellow-passengers during the voyage; the fiends who control these arrangements make enormous gains, and pay enormous wages to their "runners," but take care at

the same time to put it out of the power of their victims to obtain or even to seek legal redress. No class of immigrants suffer so much from such heartless robbers as the British, while their number precludes the possibility of giving them that warning after arrival here, which could so easily be bestowed at the time of embarkation in England. They could there be cautioned against the perils that await them, and the snares which will be laid to entrap them even before landing. They could also be told that their own countrymen here have most charitably provided protection for them from these robbers, and that an institution exists which was expressly founded for their benefit. This institution is known as The British Protective Emigrant Board. It was established in 1844 by the St George's Society of New York, well known as the oldest benevolent society in this city, and as comprising among its very numerous members the most distinguished of her Majesty's subjects here. The sole object in view is, to bestow the best advice, accompanied by every information required by newly-arrived immigrants, and otherwise to aid and assist them as far as possible. If they wish to remain in the city, respectable employment is found for them at wages proportionate to their competency; if destined for agriculture, prompt and suitable conveyances are found, even to the most distant sections, at proper prices and by the most direct routes. These, and many other services of a most important nature, are perfectly gratuitous on the part of the society. Its offices are easily found and always accessible. The high respectability of its members, and the fact of her Majesty's consul being one of the most prominent, is a sufficient guarantee that implicit confidence may be placed in it; and whoever contributes to make it known in England among those of his countrymen who are emigrating to this city, will render them an incalculable service; for with the exception of The Irish Protective Society, The British Protective Emigrant Board, at No. 86 Greenwich Street, is the only one where they will find disinterested advisers.

'SINGULAR MÉSALLIANCE.'

A descendant of the hero of the anecdote which appeared with the above title in No. 356 of this Journal has written to us to correct some of the details given by our contributor. The most important of these relates to the marriage settlement, which it seems was not made *before*, but *after* the ceremony—a circumstance exhibiting true nobility of spirit on the part of Sturgeon. The fact of the marriage had made him master of £30,000; but he proposed to his wife's uncle, Lord Mansfield, that £25,000 of this sum should be settled on Lady Henrietta, and the remainder on himself and their issue: which was accordingly done. It may likewise be mentioned that Mr Sturgeon, on his return from the continent, did not resume the humble occupations of the farm, but resided for the rest of his life with one of his daughters, who had married into an old and respectable family in the county Wicklow.

RESUSCITATION OF FROZEN FISH.

'It may be worthy of notice,' says Sir John Franklin in his *First Overland Journey to the Polar Seas*, 'that the fish froze as they were taken out of the nets, and in a short time became a solid mass of ice; and by a blow or two of the hatchet were easily split open, when the intestines might be removed in one lump. If in this completely frozen state they were thawed before the fire, they recovered their animation. This was particularly the case with the carp; and we had occasion to observe it repeatedly, as Dr Richardson occupied himself in examining the structure of the different species of fish, and was always in the winter under the necessity of thawing them. We have seen a carp recover so far as to leap about with much vigour after it had been frozen for thirty-six hours.' Mr Hearne, Mr Ellis, and other travellers in the icy regions, also mention the power of many of the lower animals to endure intense cold—mosquitoes and others of the insect tribe being frequently

frozen into one black solid mass, which, when thawed, renewed all their energies; spiders frozen so hard as to bound from the floor like a pen, were revived by the fire; so were frozen leeches, frogs, and snails.—*Zoologist*.

TO A WINTER WIND.

Loud wind, strong wind, blowing from the mountains,
Fresh wind, free wind, sweeping o'er the sea,
Pour forth thy vials like torrents from air-fountains,
Draughts of life to me!

Clear wind, cold wind, like a Northern giant,
Stars brightly threading all thy cloud-driven hair,
Thrilling the blank night with a voice defiant,
I will meet thee there!

Wild wind, bold wind, like a strong-armed angel,
Clasp me round—kiss me with thy kisses divine!
Breathes't thou my dulled heart thy secret sweet evangel—
Mine, and only mine!

Fierce wind, mad wind, howling through the nations,
Knew'st thou how leapeth that heart as thou sweep'st by,
Ah! thou wouldst pause a while in a gentle patience,
Like a human sigh.

Sharp wind, keen wind, piercing as word-arrows,
Empty thy quiverful! pass on! what is't to thee
Though in some burning eyes life's whole bright circle
narrows
To one misery!

Loud wind, strong wind, stay thou in the mountains!
Fresh wind, free wind, trouble not the sea!
Or lay thy freezing hand upon my heart's wild fountains,
That I hear not thee!

FARMING INCONSISTENCIES.

Railway hedges are neatly trimmed and annually cultivated, like a crop of turnips, and they are thus rendered effective as well as neat; but farm hedges, diverging at right angles from these, have never caught the pleasant infection. They still exhibit their huge, irregular, and ungainly proportions; shading and robbing the land, for the mere purpose of growing bushes to stop the gaps caused by their untrimmed and neglected condition. Farmers dig their gardens two feet deep, but only plough their land five inches. They take especial care of their nag horses in a good warm stable, but expose their farm horses and cattle to all weathers. They deny the utility of drainage in strong tenacious clays, but dare not dig an underground cellar in such soils, because the water would get in. They waste their liquid manure, but buy guano from Peru to repair the loss; and some practical men, who are in ecstasies with the urine of the sheepfold, have been known seriously to doubt the benefit of liquid manure. But, it may be asked, 'Where is the capital to come from for all these improvements?' The reply will be, 'Where does the capital come from to make railways and docks, to build steam-vessels, to erect a whole town of new squares and streets, and to carry out every other useful and profitable undertaking?'—*Paper read by Mr Mechi at the Society of Arts.*

JUDGMENT.

Never let it be forgotten that there is scarcely a single moral action of a single man, of which other men can have such a knowledge in its ultimate grounds, its surrounding incidents, and the real determining causes of its merits, as to warrant their pronouncing a conclusive judgment upon it.—*Quarterly Review.*

Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, High Street, Edinburgh. Also sold by D. CHAMBERS, 20 Argyle Street, Glasgow; W. & R. ORR, Amen Corner, London; and J. McGLASHAN, 30 Upper Sackville Street, Dublin.—Printed by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Edinburgh.